

# John Wilder Tukey

*Born June 16, 1915, New Bedford, Mass.; with James Cooley, the creator of the fast Fourier transform (FFT) and possible creator of the word ,bit.<sup>1</sup>*



*Education:* ScB, chemistry, Brown University, 1936; ScM, Brown University, 1937; MA, Princeton University, 1938; PhD, mathematics, Princeton University, 1939.

*Professional Experience:* Princeton University: instructor, mathematics, 1939-1941, research associate, Fire Control Research Office, 1941-1945, professor, statistics, 1965-present, Donner Professor of Science, 1976-present; Bell Telephone Laboratories: member, technical staff, 1945-1948, assistant director, Research Communication Principles, 1958-1961, associate executive director, Research Communication Principles Division, 1961-present.

*Honors and Awards:* DSc (Hon.), Case Institute of Technology, 1962; DSc (Hon.), Brown University, 1965; S.S. Wilks Medal, American Statistical Association, 1965; DSc (Hon.), Yale University, 1968; DSc (Hon.), University of Chicago, 1969; National Medal of Science, 1973; IEEE Medal of Honor, 1982; member, National Academy of Sciences; member, American Academy of Arts and Sciences; honorary member, Royal Statistical Society.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Biographical

Tropp, H.S., "Origin of the Term Bit," *Ann. Hist. Comp.*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Apr. 1984, pp. 152-155.

### Significant Publications

Cooley, J.W., and J.W. Tukey, "An Algorithm for the Computation of Complex Fourier Series," *Math. of Computation*, Apr. 1965.

## UPDATES

John Tukey died July 26, 2000 (MRW, 2013).

---

<sup>1</sup> See Tropp 1984.

Portrait added (MRW, 2013)